

Message Text

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ACTION EUR-12

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PFOR, CY, TU

SUBJ: PRESS COVERAGE OF PRESIDENT FORD'S CYPRUS REPORT

1. GREEK CYPRIOT PRESS REACTION TO PRESIDENT FORD'S FEBRUARY 5 REPORT TO CONGRESS ON CYPRUS PROGRESS HAS BEEN CRITICAL BUT BRIEF AND SURPRISINGLY MUTED. REPORT MENTIONED VERY BRIEFLY AND WITHOUT COMMENT IN ONE TURK CYPRIOT PAPER. LOCAL GREEK PRESS FEBRUARY 6 AND 7 CARRIES STORIES OF PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE PLAYING NEWS STORIES AS TRANSPARENT ATTEMPT BY ADMINISTRATION TO MISLEAD CONGRESS AND IMPLY PROGRESS ON CYPRUS PROBLEM WHERE NO REAL PROGRESS EXISTS. GOC SPOKESMAN FEBRUARY 5 DISTRIBUTED BACKGROUNDER HERE WHICH REFUTED TURKISH CLAIMS THAT 2,000 TURKISH MAINLAND TROOPS ARE BEING WITHDRAWN FROM CYPRUS. GREEK CYPRIOT NEWSPAPER INTERPRETED BACKGROUNDER AS GOC ANSWER TO PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE AND PLAYED TWO STORIES OFF AGAINST EACH OTHER.

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2. AS EXPECTED, NEARLY EVERY GREEK CYPRIOT NEWSPAPER

HAS EDITORIALIZED CRITICALLY ON PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE IN LAST
FEW DAYS. TYPICAL COMMENT WAS PRO-LYSSARIDES' TA NEA
FEBRUARY 7 WHICH IN FRONT PAGE EDITORIAL OBSERVED
"FORD LIES IN MISLEADING REPORT TO CONGRESS." PRO-
CLERIDES' AGHON FEBRUARY 10 WROTE "ARGUMENT ABOUT
PROGRESS CONSTITUTES PROVOCATIVE VIOLATION OF THE
TRUTH."

3. COMMENT: LACK OF ENTHUSIASM MARKS ALL EDITORIALS, PERHAPS
REFLECTING GREEK CYPRIOT EXPECTATIONS THAT PRESIDENT'S
MESSAGE WOULD PUT MOST OPTIMISTIC AND FAVORABLE INTERPRETATION
ON CURRENT STATUS OF CYPRUS PROBELM. END COMMENT.
CRAWFORD

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